Amendments to the Claims:

1. (currently amended) A method for selecting a particular population of women having a risk of developing obstetric or gynecologic pathologies indicated as an OR value equal or higher than 5.5, which value is calculated as the ratio between respectively the percentage of women having pathologies and those having no pathologies, said method comprising the following steps in order:

a) obtaining samples of vaginal fluid from a population of women;

~~a)~~ b) determining a levels of sialidase activity and/or a level of prolidase activity in the samples of vaginal fluid;

~~b)~~ c) determining a pH value of said samples; and

~~c)~~ d) selecting samples having a level of sialidase activity equal or above 5.0 nmol, wherein said sialidase activity is expressed as nanomoles of methoxyphenol produced from conversion of sialidase and/or a level of prolidase activity equal or above 1500 mOD for prolidase and a pH $\geq$5.0.

2. (currently amended) The method as set forth in claim 1, in which the pH of said samples selected in step ~~c)~~ d) is $\geq$5.0 and $\leq$7.0.

3. (currently amended) The method as set forth in claim 1, in which after step ~~a)~~ b) a score of said levels of sialidase and/or prolidase activity is determined.

4. (canceled)

5. (previously presented) The method as set forth in claim 1, in which the obstetric or gynecologic pathologies comprise: low birth weight (LBW), very low birth weight (VLBW) preterm delivery (PTD), early preterm delivery (EPTD), premature rupture of membranes, preterm premature rupture of membranes, intraamniotic infections, spontaneous abortion, endometritis, obstetric surgery infections, post-partum or

post-gynecologic surgery infections, pelvic surgery infections, upper genital tract infections which cause infertility, pelvic inflammatory disease (P1D), annexitis, cervicitis, sexually transmitted diseases and infections, or cervical cancer.

6. (previously presented) The method as set forth in claim 1, in which said population of women has the risk of said pathologies at a period of gestation less than 37 weeks.

7. (previously presented) The method as set forth in claim 1, in which said method is carried out in samples of vaginal fluid of pregnant women.

8. (previously presented) The method as set forth in claim 7, in which said method is carried out in samples of vaginal fluid of women in the first or second trimester of gestation.

9. (previously presented) The method as set forth in claim 7, in which said method is carried out in samples of vaginal fluid of women from the sixth to the twenty-fourth full week of gestation.

10. (previously presented) The method as set forth in claim 1, in which said method is carried out in samples of vaginal fluid of non-pregnant women.

11. (previously presented) The method as set forth in claim 1, in which said OR value is calculated and corrected by a standard factor by the SPSS computer statistic program.

12. (currently amended) A method for selecting a particular population of women having a risk of developing, VLBW, delivery at < 37 weeks' gestation, < 35 weeks' gestation or < 32 weeks' gestation, comprising the following steps in order:

a) obtaining samples of vaginal fluid from a population of women;

~~a)~~ b) determining the levels of sialidase and/or prolidase activity in samples of vaginal fluid;

~~b)~~ c) determining the pH value of said samples; and

~~c)~~ d) selecting the samples having a pH z 5.0 and a sialidase value above 0.19 nmol of methoxyphenol and/or a prolidase value above 22 mOD.

13. (currently amended) The method according to claim 12, wherein step ~~c)~~ d) comprises selecting the samples having a pH ≥5.0, sialidase level of over 2.50 nmol of methoxyphenol or a prolidase level of over 1000 mOD.

14. (currently amended) The method according to claim 12, wherein step ~~c)~~ d) comprises selecting the samples having a pH ≥ 5.0, a sialidase value above 0.19 nmol or 0.38 nmol or 2.5 nmol of methoxyphenol when it is selected or a prolidase value of over 1000 mOD.

15. (currently amended) The method according to claim 12, wherein step ~~c)~~ d) comprises selecting the samples having a pH 5.0, a sialidase value of 0.38 nmol of methoxyphenol and a prolidase value of over 22 mOD or over 44 mOD or over 1000 mOD or over 1500 mOD or over 2000 mOD.

16. (previously presented) The method according to claim 12, wherein said risk is indicated as OR value equal or higher than 5.5.

17 - 27. (canceled)

28. (currently amended) A method for selecting a particular population of women having a risk of developing obstetric or gynecologic pathologies indicated as OR value equal or higher than 5.5, which value is calculated as the ratio between respectively

the percentage of women having pathologies and those having no pathologies, comprising the following steps in order:

a) obtaining samples of vaginal fluid from a population of women;

~~a)~~ b) determining a level of sialidase enzyme activity in one or more samples of vaginal fluid:

~~b)~~ c) providing of a value indicative of the risk, wherein said value indicative of the risk is obtainable by a method comprising the steps of:

i) providing a group of women who have body fluid samples that have sialidase enzyme activity;

ii) evaluating the levels of sialidase enzyme activity in ~~such a group~~ the group provided in step i);

iii) calculating the percentage of women of said group who had said pathologies and who had no pathologies; and

iv) calculating a value and its correction with a standard factor on the basis of the percentage obtained in step Hi) in order to evaluate the value indicative of the risk;

~~c)~~ d) comparing said levels of sialidase enzyme activity obtained from the step ~~a)~~ b) with said value indicative of the risk provided in step ~~c)~~ d);

~~d)~~ e) calculating risk factor; and

~~e)~~ f) selecting a particular population of women if said particular population of women possesses said risk factor.

29. (previously presented) The method as set forth in claim 1, in which the pH of said samples selected in step c) is ≥5.0 and ≤6.0.

30. (previously presented) The method as set forth In claim 1, in which the pH of said samples selected in step c) is ≥5.0 and ≤5.5.

31. (previously presented) The method as set forth in claim 1, in which said population of women has the risk of said pathologies at a period of gestation less than 35 weeks.

32. (previously presented) The method as set forth in claim 1, in which said population of women has the risk of said pathologies at a period of gestation less than 32 weeks.

33. (currently amended) The method according to claim 16, wherein said OR value is calculated ~~preferably~~ by the SPSS computer statistic program.